

City of Mississauga  
**Corporate Report**



<p>Date: May 25, 2021</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of Heritage Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, CMA, Commissioner of Community Services</p>	<p>Meeting date: June 8, 2021</p>

## Subject

**Request to Demolish all Structures at 611 Derry Road West (Ward 11)**

## Recommendation

1. That an interpretation and commemoration plan be added as a condition to the demolition permit, as a requirement on any future development application for the property.
2. The owner's request to demolish proceeds through the applicable process with the conditions discussed below as per the Corporate Report from the Commissioner of Community Services May 25, 2021.

## Executive Summary

- The property owner has submitted an application for the demolition of all structures at 611 Derry Road West.
- The house is listed on the City's Heritage Register and is known as the Robert Bell House, named after the original occupant of the house.
- The property has suffered two major fires; the first in May 2020 and the second in March, 2021.
- The property is found to meet the criteria under Regulation 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* to merit designation. However the structure has also been critically damaged and an accompanying engineer's report recommends demolition and removal.

## Background

Section 27.3 of the Ontario Heritage Act states that structures or buildings on property listed on the City's Heritage Register cannot be removed or demolished without at least 60 days' notice to Council. This legislation allows time for Council to review the property's cultural heritage value to determine if the property merits designation.

The owner of the subject property has submitted a heritage permit application to demolish all the structures on the property. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been submitted in support of the application (Appendix 1).

The property has suffered two fires over the past year. The first fire took place in May, 2020 and another impacted the structure earlier this year.

A heritage engineer's report, prepared by Tacoma Engineering, was included in the HIA and recommends the demolition of the house as it is not salvageable post-fire. The other buildings located on the property are more recent and are not considered to have any heritage value.

The house is known as the Robert Bell House as he was the original patent for the property in 1851. The house originally dates to the Bell family's ownership of the property. The property was also owned by General Lessard, a noted and celebrated Canadian Army Officer and veteran of World War I.

The HIA submitted in support of this application notes that the property currently meets two of three criteria for designation under regulation 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The property is found to have contextual value as the house is a prominent landmark on Derry Road West and it also holds associative value due to the prominent members of Meadowvale Village who resided and owned the house. It should also be noted that the property was originally listed on the City's Heritage Register for its architectural value of being a one and half storey house of neoclassical design.

## Comments

The HIA submitted in support of the application recommends the removal of the house with regret, and it is in the same form that staff concur with that recommendation. The HIA further notes that the property meets two criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; it has contextual value as it is a local landmark along Derry Road and it has associative value as it is associated with prominent past residents of Meadowvale Village.

In cases where heritage properties have suffered a catastrophic loss the first consideration is to view whether or not the house can be salvaged and whether or not there are any other heritage considerations associated with a property. In this instance, the engineer's report is clear that the entirety of the house would have to be replaced and restoration is not feasible. The replacement of the house would be a replica of the original house but would not have any of the original components of character. With the application for demolition, it further impacts the property's criteria for designation as the property loses its contextual value with the removal of the house and loss of the landmark.

The property is currently being sold as a development opportunity and has been for several years. In order to consider the associative value of the property Staff propose interpretation of the property, the family or a combination thereof. An interpretation plan would be a requirement on any future development application when it is submitted in order to mitigate the final heritage

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concerns for this property. Interpretation will allow for a commemoration of this part of Meadowvale's history while still allowing the house to be removed.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts resulting from the Recommendations in this report.

## **Conclusion**

The owner of the property has requested permission to demolish all structures on the property. The original house has suffered from two fires and is in need of removal. The property is found to meet some criteria for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act and staff recommend interpretation to meet this criteria. With regret, Staff recommends approval of the demolition of the Robert Bell House.

## **Attachments**

Appendix 1: Heritage Impact Assessment and Engineer's Report



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Shari Lichterman, CPA, CMA, Commissioner of Community Services

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